



Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE 1997 CALIFORNIA WOMEN’S HEALTH SURVEY

Food security is an important measure of basic well being and health. Households are considered food secure when they have access to enough food that is nutritionally adequate, safe, and acquired in a culturally acceptable manner, i.e., not through emergency food sources¹. Inability to meet these requirements is clearly affected by general poverty. The women at greatest risk of suffering from conditions associated with poor nutrition and hunger are women of childbearing age, those with chronic disease, and elderly women. Some diseases associated with poor nutritional status are more common among women of certain racial/ethnic groups. In particular, diabetes and hypertension occur more commonly among African-American and Latina women than among other women.

The 1997 California Women’s Health survey asked women “**During the past month, were there any days when you ate less than you felt you should or did not eat at all because there wasn’t enough food or money to buy food?**” Women who answered yes to this question were considered to be at risk for hunger. Household income and size were used to classify households as being above or below the national poverty level.

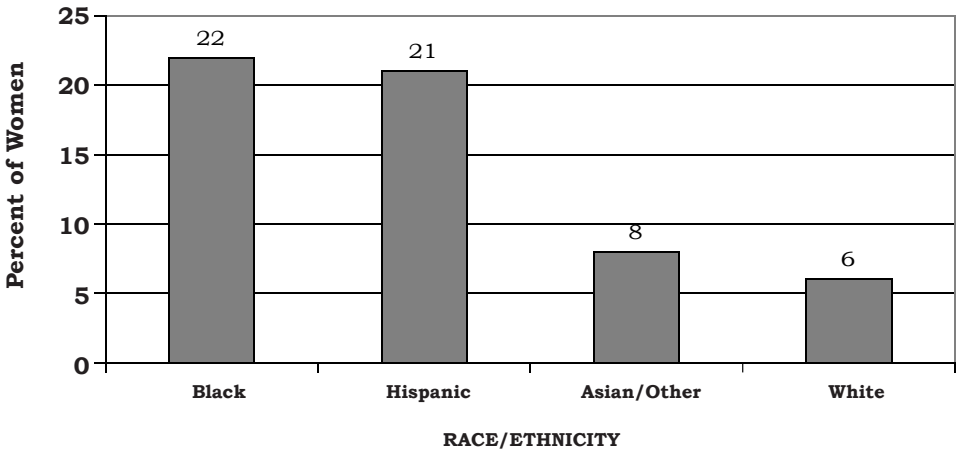
- Of all women, 10% were at risk for hunger.
- Women living in households below the national poverty level were more likely than other women to be at risk for hunger.
- Black and Hispanic women were more than twice as likely as Asian and White women to be at risk for hunger.

RISK FOR HUNGER AMONG WOMEN, BY RACE/ETHNICITY; CALIFORNIA, 1997

Office of Women’s Health
Maternal and Child Health Branch

¹ “Measuring Food Security in the U.S.: A Supplement to the CPS.” Gary Bickel, Margaret Andrews, and Bruce Klein, USDA Food and Consumer Service, Office of Analysis and Evaluation, Alexandria, VA, January 1996.

Risk for Hunger Among Women, By Race/Ethnicity; California, 1997



Public Health Message:

A large number of California women are at risk for hunger. Efforts should be made to assure an adequate supply of food for all California women, particularly Black and Hispanic women who are at greatest risk for not having enough food.

Issue 1, Number 14, Fall 1999
Second Printing